

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 7, 8 and 15 have been rejected, and claims 4-6, 9-14, 16 and 17 have been objected to by the Examiner. Claims 15 and 16 are herein canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-3, 8 and 17, of which claims 1 and 8 are independent, are herein amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,288,698 (Ishii) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,348,909 (Kim). Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishii in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,485,558 (Weise).

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated essentially the features of claim 16 into claim 1 to place claim 1 in condition for allowance.

With regard to claim 8, the Examiner asserted that it is a method claim corresponding to the apparatus of claim 1 and rejected it on the same basis. Applicants submit that claim 8 was improperly rejected and request that the rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Claim 8 as previously amended included the feature of, “storing binary data of gray level in a first, a second, a third and a fourth dithering pattern register each register having a denominator value, wherein the gray levels use the same bit number as the denominator values of the first, second, third and fourth dithering pattern registers.” This feature was not found in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 8 was improperly rejected because it included a feature that was not found in claim 1.

In addition, claim 8 included subject matter that the Examiner indicated as being allowable. More specifically, claim 8 included essentially all the subject matter of claim 16 that the Examiner indicated as being allowable if incorporated into a base claim. Accordingly, Applicants submit that this rejection was improper because the allowable subject matter of claim 16 was already incorporated into claim 8.

Nevertheless, Applicants have amended claim 8 to bring it into conformity with the amendments to claim 1 and therefore believe claim 8 to be allowable for at least the same reasons discussed above with reference to claim 1.

Dependent claims 2 and 3 have also been amended to bring them into conformity with the amendments to claim 1, from which they depend, and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 1.

Dependent claim 17 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 15, and is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above with reference to claim 1.

Claim Objections

Claims 4-6, 9-14, 16 and 17 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in dependent form including all the limitations of their base claims and any intervening claims.

Claim 16 is herein canceled. The amendments to claims 1 and 8, from which claims (4-6), and (9-14 and 17) depend, respectively, render moot the objections to these claims.

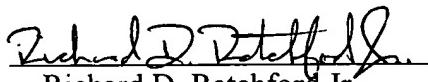
Dependent Claims

Applicants have not independently addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that, in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein and, for at least similar reasons as why the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend are believed allowable as discussed, *supra*, the dependent claims are also allowable. Applicants however, reserve the right to address any individual rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary or appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims as herein presented are allowable over the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, and that the respective rejections be withdrawn. Applicants further submit that the application is hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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